

EuroDIG Plenary 4: Arrangements for a European IGF and Future EuroDIG events

Responses to questions about national IGF structures: Ukraine

1. Effectiveness of national IGF structures?

What is your experience with the effectiveness of your national IGFs discussions? How do you make sure that your national IGF discussions do have an impact on the policy discussion and on national legislation process? How do you make sure that the relevant stakeholders get together and have a constructive exchange?

How do you make sure that your national IGF helps people to better understand the challenges related to Internet Governance?

I do not want to sound sceptic, but in my opinion the IGF discussions in Ukraine were not visible and effective, because the primary direction of the country is to ensure stable functioning of critical infrastructure and access to the Internet, as well as establish basic norms of IG. Basic discussions of IG issues started only recently, so there is a big potential and future and it is important for the key players to step in now so that this discussion is not lost.

In order to ensure that the national IGF discussions have effectiveness and impact on other structures, it is important to find key stakeholders and key politicians that may bring up these topics to the discussion in the 'higher circles'. The content of the IGF should be appropriate and relevant to the current situation in the country, and international support in these issues is also welcomed.

It is a good question. I think that the best way to get all the relevant stakeholders together is to launch a special forum or conference. An auditory mechanism (either from a Ministry or from international organizations) is needed for further implementation of the result of such a conference.

The best way to make sure that the IGF helps people to understand challenges related to IG is to show immediate results and relevant impact by providing people with concrete examples and stories. Some campaigning and social advertising would be good.

2. European Approach on Internet Governance?

What is "European" about the Internet Governance Discussion in Europe? What can Europe contribute to the global Internet Governance Discussion? What are European perspectives, best practices and how should they feed into the global IGF?

"European" means functioning of IG within the EU, I think. Therefore the EU practices, cases and legislation and its national implementation are the typical examples of "European" about the IG Discussions. Europe can contribute with relevant cases and country studies, especially with regards to the implementation of the EU legislation related to IG issues.

In my opinion, the European perspectives and best practices concern standardization (IRIS is a key player), dispute resolutions (ECHR) and policy enforcement issues (national governments). Best practices concern dispute resolutions with regards to privacy, IPR and defamation issues, they are based on continental European approach to these issues and they differ quite a lot from, e.g., US approach. Therefore these issues should be taken into consideration in the global 'IGF' as Europe is one of the biggest players and stakeholders. The 'European' opinion can balance other universal opinions and practices providing better support and protection to the subjects of IG.

3. European IGF: mandate and objectives?

Is there a need/desire for a European IGF? If yes, what should be its mandate and objectives? Which stakeholders should participate?

Yes, there is a need for a European IGF, as the international one is dominated by US stakeholders that tend to impose their opinion and approach on the rest of the world. Its objectives should be to unify key I issues within Europe and bring them to the world's attention, as well as to take active part in universal decision making as a representative of all European countries. With regards to the stakeholders, if the European ones are meant, these should be CoE, European Commission, European Parliament, NGOs (both EU and national), standardization entities and national governments.

4. European IGF: structure and working methods?

How should such a regional forum work? How should it be organized and how should it be funded? How should it link to national, global and other regional Internet governance initiatives? How could it help to improved e-participation in internet governance in Europe?

This should be an online forum, a sort of a social networking website with online webinars and annual (at least) offline meetings. There should be created a database of IG related issues – laws, cases, policy issues, news - that should be updated. An online magazine/portal should be also created to report to people the results of the work and cooperation. Moreover, cooperation with key players and especially major universal and national policy makers should be established. The funding issues is not easy, most probably this should be CoE support and private donations. The question is that the donors should not impose their interests and wishes on the forum not to make it biased. It can help to the improved e-participation by connecting key stakeholders and providing them with visible benefits of their involvement and relatively fast results in decision-making.

Maria Morozova, Ukraine